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ABSTRACT

Described are perceptual motor activities in the areas of coordination, agility, strength, balance, and endurance for use with learning disabled children. Provided are a rationale for movement education and definitions of 10 terms such as laterality and endurance. A sequence of activities is provided for the following skills: ball bouncing, rope jumping, ball throwing and catching, clock turns, paddle ball, and kicking. (DB)

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PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT

WITH LEARNING DISABILITY CHILDREN

Activities groups can do for personal involvement with learning disability children thru movement education.

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Rationale: Perceptual-motor development, according to development specialists, is a very vital part of the normal development of an individual. Some specialists go even further in their endorsement of motor behavior, stating that the only creative outlet for young children is in motoric expression. (Merry, Frieda & Merry, R. V.; Millard, C.V; Piaget, J.)

The importance of the motor cortex as it is related to learning has long been discussed by theorists in psychology and education. According to Penfield every sensory stimulus received on the post-central gyrus (sensory) is accompanied by an activity on the pre-central cortex, a concomitant activation is noted in the motor area.

The behavoristic theory by Hebb, which utilizes the cell assembly and phase sequence as explanatory constructs, brought to the attention of researchers the necessity of considering neurophysiology when studying any type of learning.

Kephart, who based his theory on work done by Sherrington, Gesell, Piaget, Hebb, and Strauss, empphasizes structural concepts along with early motor learning.

Basically, the survey subtests can be divided into five major sections: coordination, agility, strength, flexibility, and speed. These will include some aspect of laterality and directionality, and the skill of perceptual-motor matching. Some items will include laterality, body image, rhythm, and neuro-muscular differentiation for example; clock turns and jump rope.

According to Strauss, the learning of concepts by children involves the manipulation of relationships between percepts. Therefore, since concept formation is dependent upon the manipulation of perceptual data, if a breakdown occurs in the process of perceptual organization it may interfere with the more complex developments to follow. A breakdown may occur at any level, thereby providing an inadequate foundation for all successive levels.

According to the President's Council on Youth Fitness, "Physical fitness is but one aspect of fitness; however, it is a very significant aspect and one which is basic to other forms of excellence. Efforts to improve physical fitness should be carried on with full regard for all fitness qualities - mental, emotional, and social".

According to the theories presented here, the incoming information for perception is matched to the motor base information, which when structured allows further information which is incoming to become structured.

To determine the successful level of functioning, these activities were used with 160 learning disability children in the Dade County area from age 6 through age 16. It was found that if a child developed the ability to do an activity a given number of times, he could continue to develop this activity on his own. The follow-up was done over a four month period.

INTRODUCTION

This program is designed to enable groups to work with and enhance the development of learning disability children's ability in academic learning, physical coordination, good feelings about themselves, and their relationship to others.

Movement education can prepare them to withstand pressures and anxieties as children and adults.

Why is improvement of movement skills important:

- because they do not exist in isolation - they are accompanied by sensations and perceptual experiences.
- because they are sensory motor activities and should be taught that way.

The person working with the child should be concerned with the initiation and direction of movement by auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic stimuli.

Thru these activities the group will be assisting the child in developing: body awareness, creative movement, patterns, receptive language, auditory attention, memory for sequence, self-control, social awareness, and concepts of time and space.

The five broad areas of training for movement skills included are: coordination (which included rhythm), agility, strength, balance, and endurance.

TERMS

Learning Disability - is a catch all phrase which may include children who have had environmental deprivation, a defect in the regulatory functions of the nervous system, minimal brain dysfunction, but for some reason are not learning in some academic area in a regular classroom. They may have perceptual, auditory, kinesthetic, or perceptual-motor disturbances and/or be a slow learner.(The slow learner or non-achiever is the child who does seem to learn academically.)

Coordination - is the coordinated use of several muscle groups simultaneously.
Rhythm - a flowing movement with a measured temporal quantity.

Agility - if nimbleness and the capacity for fast reaction in body movement. Does the child have the ability to initiate movement, change direction, or otherwise adjust position speedly?

Strength - measures capacity for exertion or endurance and refers to force exerted either with the whole body or with parts of it (specific muscle groups).

Speed - the ability to achieve a fast tempo during a movement sequence.

Balance - the stability to maintain a position with minimal contact with a surface. There are two kinds of balance the group will be working with; static (not moving), and dynamic.

Endurance - the ability to persist in physical activity and to withstand muscular fatigue.

Laterality - is an internal process; it is the awareness within the body of the difference between right and left.

Directionality-(right-left, up-down, before-behind) is first developed within the body and then projected onto outside space. This process of perception projection is directionality.

Sequence - an ordering in time of dissimilar objects (words, letters, numbers, physical activities) or events.

Coordination: ball activities
jump rope activities
clock turns
paddle ball
kicking

Agility: ball activities (throwing & catching)
combinations on command
jump rope

Strength: jump rope
clock turns

Balance: clock turns

Endurance: Jump Rope

Eye-motor: ball activities
paddle ball
kicking

Laterality & Directionality: clock turns
jump rope

BALL ACTIVITIES - BOUNCING

Equipment - 1 - 16" ball or a basketball

Yellow - Bounce ball with preferred hand as many times as you can. Over twenty move on to next activity. Under ten first goal would be number done. Each time increase goal by 2 bounces until 20 has been reached.

Blue - Bounce with nonpreferred hand as many times as you can. Over twenty move on to next activity. Under ten first goal would be number done. Each time increase goal by 2 bounces until 20 has been reached.

Green - Have child repeat direction before he starts. Bounce the ball five times and count switch to other hand and bounce the ball five times and count. The child must tell you if he completed correctly the activity. Continue this activity until the above has been done five times.

Red - Bounce ball with preferred hand each time a step is taken count outloud. Continue this activity until it can be done 20 times. Then start with the nonpreferred hand until it can be done 20 times.

Purple - Bounce the ball and take a step at the same time - use the right hand for three bounces then switch the ball to the left hand for three bounces. Have the child repeat the directions and then tell you if he followed them. Continue this activity until ten exchanges have been completed without a pause.

Orange - Bounce ball each time a step is taken and switch to other hand after each bounce. Continue this activity until 20 exchanges have been completed without a pause.

Pink - Running slowly dribble the ball with preferred hand until the child can dribble 20 times without a pause.

Black - Running slowly dribble ball with nonpreferred hand until the child can dribble 20 times without a pause.

Brown - Running-bounce the ball with each step and switch hands after the third bounce. Continue the activity until ten exchanges have been completed without a pause.

JUMP ROPE

Equipment - 1 jump rope from a sporting goods shop which has a spring or a ball bearing. 1" garden hose the length of a jump rope.

If a child can jump with both feet proceed -

If a child is unable to Jump look below at ***

Yellow - Jump both feet at same time; start with five and continue activity until child can do twenty without missing.

Blue - Jump on preferred foot only start with five and continue activity until child can do fifteen.

Green - Jump on nonpreferred foot only start with five and continue activity until child can do fifteen.

Red - Jump turning rope backwards start with five and continue activity until child can do fifteen.

Purple - Jump rope combination - three forward, three backward start with three and continue activity until child can do the combination ten times without missing.

Orange - Practice turning rope to side in circle pass in front of body and turn on other side continue activity until child can do it ten times.

Pink - Child turns rope on right side in circle one time, passes rope in front of body and turns it once in circle on left side, the last turn ends in front so three jumps may be done. The complete combination is repeated until ten in a row may be done by the child without missing.

Black - Child can swing the rope backward and forward about 6" off the ground and jump it each time. The activity is continued until twenty in a row can be done.

Brown - Jump rope with right foot then left foot alternating with each turn of the rope. Continue activity until twenty can be done.

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Teach the child to turn the garden hose slowly and jump start with two and continue activity until he can do ten.

BALL ACTIVITIES - THROWING AND CATCHING

Equipment - 1 - 16" ball
1 - Tennis ball
1 - Football

Yellow - Child is able to catch a 16" ball with arms and hands and throw.

Blue - Child can catch a 16" ball with hands and can throw to a person.

Green - Child can catch a tennis ball and throw.

Red - Child can catch a tennis ball and throw it with one hand to a person.

Purple - Child can successfully play toss with one person.

Orange - Child can successfully play toss with many people.

Pink - Child can catch a football and throw it.

Black - Child can catch and throw correctly to a person.

Brown - Child can catch a football while running.

CLOCK TURNS

Equipment - none
Child always begins by facing 12 o'clock

Yellow - Child is able to jump straight up and land "through the feet", * bending knees, and come to an upright position without losing his balance.

Blue - Review the positions, on the imaginary clock, of 3, 6, 9, and 12. Have the child face 12 o'clock to begin.

Green - The child will practice quarter turns. When the child can complete a quarter turn correctly, in both directions, he will then be asked to make a quarter turn to the right and tell what number he would land on the clock (3 o'clock). Then he would be told to take another quarter turn to the right and tell what number he would land on the clock. Each time he must tell whether he matched the directions or mismatched. This is continued until the child can do quarter turns in either direction and match the directions. The child must also be able to reverse directions and match.

Red - Child must be taught how to swing his arms by throwing them both in the direction he wants to turn. The arms lead and the head leads until the turn is complete. Repeat until the child is able to turn without a pause in either direction.

Purple - The child does half turns in both directions without pausing, using arms correctly, landing correctly, and knowing whether he is matching the directions.

Orange - Child is able to do quarter turns and half turns intermixed and repeat directions. He is able to tell where he will land on the clock and whether he matched or not.

Pink - Full turns are practiced, and understood.

Black - Full clock turns using arms, landing correctly, and able to repeat and match directions.

Brown - Child can repeat directions, use arms correctly, land correctly, and know whether he matched or mismatched in doing quarter, half, and full clock turns intermixed.

* Land on toes, ball of foot, and then heel of foot in a quick flowing sequential order

PADDLE BALL

Equipment - 1 - Paddle Ball

Yellow - Child is shown how to hold the paddle using the preferred hand. The index finger is used as a guide on the bottom of the paddle, the thumb wraps around from the side away from the body and holds the handle from that side. The other three fingers wrap around to the top of the handle from the side facing the body and hold the the handle. The paddle is turned in a sideward position with the large portion facing the opposite direction than the preferred hand. The ball is hanging toward the ground.

Blue - The child hits the ball downward. This activity should start with five and continue until twenty can be done without missing.

Green - The child starts with the nonpreferred hand. The child hits the ball downward until he is able to do twenty without missing. The paddle is in a sideward position with the large portion facing the opposite direction than the nonpreferred hand.

Red - The child is shown how to hold the paddle to hit the ball upward with the ball hanging over the front edge toward the ground. The child is shown how to swing the ball into the air to land approximately in the middle of the paddle for preparation for hitting. This activity continues until the child can get the ball to land approximately in the center of the paddle on each swing.

Purple - The child starts with the preferred hand and hits the ball toward the sky. This activity should start with five and build by three until thirty-six is reached.

KICKING

Equipment - 1 - 16" ball
1 - Football
1 - Wall

Yellow - Child is shown how to kick the 16" ball. The ball is kicked on the ground against the wall with the preferred foot. The activity is continued until the child can do twenty without stopping.

Blue - The child uses the nonpreferred foot. He kicks the 16" ball against the wall on the ground. The activity is continued until the child can do twenty without stopping.

Green - The child uses both feet, alternating the right and left. He kicks the ball against the wall on the ground. The activity is continued until the child can do thirty without stopping.

Red - The ball is rolled to the child and he kicks it with his preferred foot. This activity is continued until the child can kick ten in a row.

Purple - The child holds the ball in the air between his hands and kicks it with his preferred foot. This activity continues until the child can do it without missing.

Orange - The child is shown how to hold a football in his hands and kick it. This activity continues until the child can do it without missing.

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